

Speaking Notes

For

The Honourable Bill Blair

**President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada
and Minister of Emergency Preparedness**

**Ministerial Presser: Protests in Ottawa
Wednesday, February 9, 2022**

[APG]

- Good afternoon,
- Thank you for joining us today.
- Before we begin, I would like to acknowledge that I'm joining you from the traditional territory of the Missisaugua's of the Credit.
- Last night, Minister Mendicino and I hosted the second meeting of the Table, with Mayor Watson and his officials. The Prime Minister also spoke with Mayor Watson yesterday afternoon to reaffirm our government's support for the City of Ottawa.
- We're working very closely with our municipal partners to ensure that the Ottawa Police have the resources they need to enforce the law, and bring things to an end.

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- While we've been engaging with Mayor Watson on a daily basis, I would strongly encourage our provincial partners to do the same. The City of Ottawa needs all levels of government to participate in these discussions, as we work to safely, and swiftly, end this occupation and return to normal.
- Until then, we will continue reaching out to Minister Jones and her officials, asking them to join these critically important calls. We all have a job to do. We all have a responsibility to work as partners in public safety.
- And if the province won't propose their own solutions, it is our sincere hope that they will help us with ours - and join us for our next meeting.
- As we monitor the situation in Ottawa, we are also seized with what's happening at the Ambassador Bridge in Windsor.

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- Truckers, who have kept our shelves stocked throughout the pandemic, are currently being blocked or slowed down while carrying essential goods into our country from the United States.
- These truckers - heroes of the pandemic - are being unlawfully stopped and slowed down while doing their jobs.
- Let me be very clear - the Ambassador Bridge is a vital artery in Canada's supply chain. It is absolutely central to our economy. Blockades like this have a critical impact on our supply chains, and by extension, the lives of all Canadians.
- This blockade must end before further damage is done.

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- The same should be said for those individuals trying to blockade traffic in Coutts, Alberta, or anywhere else in the country.
- These demonstrations are harmful to your fellow Canadians.
- Our government will continue to work with and support all police of jurisdiction in managing and quickly ending these blockades.
- As we've said all week - and throughout the past two years for that matter - this pandemic has been extremely difficult for every single Canadian.
- No one wanted this pandemic. But by coming together - being decent to one another, and respecting each other - we will get through this. It's the Canadian way.

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- Thank you very much. I will now pass things over to my colleague Minister Alghabra.

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